

Service Area

CHOICES opened as an independent Center in October 1998. Our main office is located in Roswell. CHOICES' currently has two satellite offices, one in Carlsbad and one in Hobbs. Our service area is Chaves, Eddy and Lea counties.

SERVICES

Service Dogs- CHOICES offers PTSD, Mobility Assist, and Guide Dogs/Seeing Eye Dogs. This is a new program and our first litter of pups has begun training. Many of our community members including our veterans have told us of the need for a service dog. They are struggling to find an agency that does not have a waiting list or a fee for their animals. Most are not able to travel hundreds of miles and be gone for weeks in order to qualify for a service animal. We are hoping to fill the gap in services in our area to be more accessible and beneficial.

LLA-(local lead agency) - CHOICES recently signed a contract with the state to oversee the tax credit properties being built in Artesia. As this is part of our catchment area adding this service will benefit our consumer's immensely. This will add opportunities for low-income housing that have not been available before.

CHOICES' tries to empower individuals to learn how to live independently thus improving the quality of their life. We give them the tools necessary to succeed. We give them security in their life that boosts confidence and gives them the ability to try new things. In trying new things they learn to grow and have self-esteem.

Needs of our community

Housing- Our counties lack affordable housing which leads to homeless individuals. We have waiting lists that span 1 to 3 years. Due to the lack of housing our nursing homes are trying to release people into homeless shelters.

Income- The struggle for individuals to get disability benefits is growing every day. More people are being denied even though they clearly qualify. We have to file repeated appeals just to get them qualified. The waiting time to receive benefits can be anywhere from 1 to 6 years.

Home Modifications- The state needs more funding to provide home modifications. These modifications can be the difference between living in their home or being institutionalized, in places such as nursing homes or group facilities if they qualify. If they do not qualify they will be living in homeless shelters if space is available.

Shelter- Our current shelters will turn individuals away due to disabilities. They are not willing to take someone that cannot walk certain distances and refuse to take anyone with a mental disorder. They say individuals with mental disorders are a danger to others. The only shelter in Hobbs will only allow for a week stay and you must leave every day all day. For those in need of a shelter this poses a problem.

Mental Health Services- Chaves County struggles to get an agency, as well as keep an agency that can provide mental health services. The lack of continuing services in this area causes individuals to fall through that cracks and not receive proper services. This can lead to homelessness as well as being arrested. Being arrested causes other issues to arise and pose new problems for the individual.

Rep Payee Services- Chaves and Eddy County have one source for this service and are not taking any new clients. Having your money managed by someone who is hours away is clearly not the greatest solution. Having little access to their money causes frustration, lack of necessities, and payments made late.

Sign Language Interpreters- We lack this service almost completely. We have 3 interpreters that work for the school system. Doctors and hospital are denying the deaf individuals interpreters based off the lack of them. They are forcing them to use teletype computers or writing on paper. To a deaf person using this type of communication is frustrating and not beneficial, as deaf individuals don't always understand the English language. This is a growing issue. Therefore, our deaf community members suffer and are not getting what they need.

Transportation- We have been trying to get our public transportation to add bus stops to increase service areas. We have not been successful yet. We continue to fight this issue. Our bus system does not run the full schedule on weekends. This keeps our consumers at home all weekend.

Medicaid/Medicare- Our consumers are on one of these insurances. Most of our doctors have stopped accepting these. This makes for months of waiting just to see a physician. Some of our consumers are traveling to Lubbock or Albuquerque just to receive healthcare. We are also having trouble getting equipment approved through Medicaid and Medicare.

Guardians- lack of supervision on appointed Guardians is becoming a problem. They are not following through with the tasks that are given to them and we are seeing more abuse associated with guardianship. Rights are being violated by court appointed guardians. When this matter is addressed no one seems to follow through with monitoring the complaints.

Need for more staff- We are getting so many new consumers that we are struggling to provide services for all that need them. Increased funding would eradicate this problem. Having enough staff to tend to consumers will make the services we provide more efficient.